

NCDA&CS Ag EOC Activation Exercise 2014

NCDA&CS and Partners Exercise Disaster Response Plans

By Mark Howell, NCDA&CS

On Aug. 12, 2014, the Emergency Programs Division brought together representatives from the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, local and state emergency management, NC Civil Air Patrol, NC -SART, and NCVRC to participate in an activation drill in the Agriculture Emergency Operation Center in Raleigh. This year's exercise focused on the need to prepare all agricultural response partners in multi-hazard approach utilizing Incident Command System principles and partner integration in response.

The exercise scenario focused on hurricane preparedness and response in advance of any actual hurricane activity. These storms typically provide challenges to the agricultural infrastructure and require a wide range of expertise, knowledge and cooperation to protect residents, their animals and property. The scenario, a fictional Category 3 storm named Hurricane Tiawana, approached the state from the southeast, taking aim at the central western portion of the state roughly following I-77 and affecting a wide range of jurisdictions and adjacent agricultural infrastructure.

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Mark Howell briefs participants at the activation exercise.

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**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE &
 CONSUMER SERVICES**

Emergency Programs Division

Steve Troxler, Commissioner

Sharron Stewart, Director



Local Companion Animal Sheltering Drills

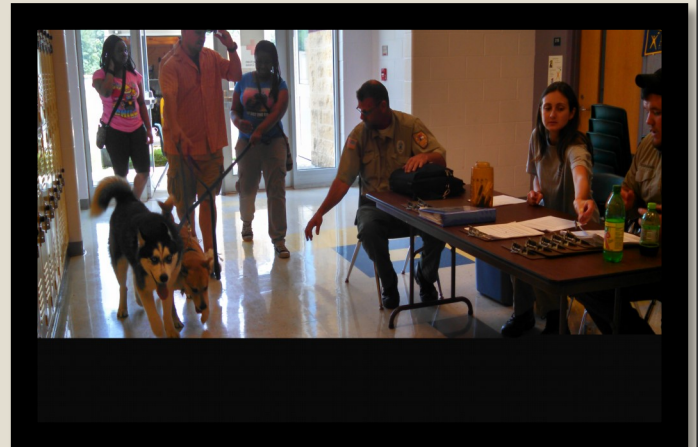
By Dr. Mandy Tolson, NCDA&CS

The best way to be prepared for any disaster is to practice your plan. Many counties and agencies update their plans during the year and exercise their plans before hurricane season. These exercises involve testing call down plans to touch base with contacts and ensure that everything is up to date; testing equipment to ensure it is operational; conducting an inventory of equipment to make sure everything is in place; practicing setting up equipment and training staff and volunteers to be able to work with the available resources. These exercises and drills provide a great opportunity for networking and knowing your partners in your county, region and state, which is invaluable in times of disaster.

I had the opportunity to observe colocation shelter exercises this year in both New Hanover and Onslow counties. These counties have had a lot of experience setting up their shelters and using their CAMETs. Each year they conduct drills to ensure that volunteers have had the proper training and are ready to go in an emergency situation.

Both counties practiced registration of people and pets into their shelter. It was great for volunteers to see how people and their pets flow through the shelters and see what works best for this process.

If you are unsure of your county's plan for sheltering pets and their owners, contact your local emergency management for more information. Also, if you are interested in helping in these shelters I know they will be happy to hear from you as well!



Both colocation shelters practiced checking pets in and setting up the shelter area.



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COMPLETE YOUR VRC
REGISTRATION AT
WWW.SERVNC.ORG

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Please see our website for future training and activities.
- Check out our sheltering webinars posted on the website!
- <http://www.ncagr.gov/oep/sheltering/>

REQUIREMENTS FOR VRC DEPLOYMENT

- ICS 100, 200, and 700
- Biosecurity/PPE Training
- Knowledge of NC Emergency Management
- Knowledge of Emergency Support Functions
- Attendance at VRC Meetings
- Sign a Code of Conduct

NCDA&CS Ag EOC Activation Exercise 2014

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Participants were given briefings on all areas of ICS.

Teams, Civil Air Patrol response and cadet capability integration, NC Emergency Management Search and Rescue, and an overview of NCDA&CS divisional resources available for response. Participants were also familiarized with the critical equipment and systems available in the AgEOC should an activation occur.

One of the critical components of any response is safety for all involved and is a priority for North Carolina's governmental agencies. NCDA&CS safety director Doug Gaylord provided a presentation on response safety that highlighted individual responsibility for safety of all responders and NCDA&CS commitment to safety at all times. Exercise participants were also briefed by NOAA meteorologist Brian Figurski, from the National Weather Service's Raleigh office, on the anticipated hurricane forecast for 2014 and the climatological models that are used to forecast and predict the development of tropical systems. The didactic portion of the exercise concluded with a presentation by Dr. Anna Allen about the NCDA&CS continuity of operations plan, including recent revisions and updates. Following lunch for participants provided by NCSART, the NCDA&CS incident management team and select members of the Emergency Programs and NCDA&CS ISS staff tested the off-site activation portion of the NCDA&CS COOP Plan.

The 2014 hurricane season in North Carolina, was unremarkable, while we faced only one storm that brushed our coast we were fortunate to not have faced a storm with devastating effects. NCDA&CS will remain vigilant in our preparedness efforts knowing that North Carolina's coast can expect to receive tropical weather on an almost yearly basis.

VRC MISSION: Train and prepare professionals in the animal care community to respond to disaster events (all hazards) that affect both production and companion animals. Our members will serve as a resource for our state and the nation.

NOTES: To see recent news and updates, please visit the VRC website at www.ncvrc.org. If you have questions about the VRC or would like to offer suggestions or articles for future newsletters, contact Mandy at mandy.tolson@ncagr.gov.

NCDA&CS Emergency Programs Welcomes New Employees!

Charles “Tom” Guy



The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is proud to welcome Charles “Tom” Guy as an emergency programs specialist with the Emergency Programs Division. Tom comes with a rich background that includes logistics, public health, emergency management, farming and others. Tom also spent more than 18 years in the Army, serving in several foreign countries and gaining valuable experience that translates directly to his duties today. Tom is a highly energetic person who loves to “get things done, and make a difference.” He is assigned to the central region, and is the division’s primary logistics representative.

He will coordinate various training events for the division utilizing poultry depopulation equipment, serve as the safety representative, and as the primary expert for the Viper 800mhz radio system. Tom is well suited for this role and will no doubt excel in his endeavors. Please welcome Tom to the department.

Cody Grasty

The NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services welcomed Cody Grasty to the team in October 2014. Cody was hired as an emergency programs specialist with the Emergency Programs Division, and is currently assigned to the mountain region. Cody has a diverse background that includes a master’s degree in Emergency Management, several years of experience in public health, EMT certification, and he is a qualified NC law enforcement officer. Cody also has farmland in Haywood County where he raises cattle. Cody has an attitude of getting the job done efficiently and effectively. He takes the initiative and has already brought tremendous ideas to the team.

As the mountain region EP specialist, Cody will interact with representatives from the counties he is assigned. These include cooperative extension agents, county emergency management, public health officials, animal control and others. Please welcome Cody Grasty.

